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Serial No.: 10/708,089

Art Unit: 3617

Examiner: WRIGHT, Andrew D.

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IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. – 18. (Cancelled)

19. (Original) An outboard motor comprising:

an internal combustion engine to provide thrust to propel a watercraft;

an engine component in operable association with internal combustion engine operation, the engine component rated to operate at a rated maximum voltage; and

an engine control unit to control the engine component to operate at a voltage that exceeds the rated maximum voltage.

20. (Original) The outboard motor of claim 19 further comprising a voltage source to apply voltage to the engine component at a voltage that exceeds the rated maximum voltage of the engine component.

21. (Original) The outboard motor of claim 19 wherein the engine control unit includes an engine component drive circuit configured to switch the engine component between ON and OFF states to maintain current through the engine component at a desired amperage.

22. (Original) The outboard motor of claim 19 wherein the engine control unit is further configured to compare a rail voltage applied to the engine component to a reference voltage and determine switching of the engine component between ON and OFF states therefrom.

23. (Original) The outboard motor of claim 22 further comprising an engine component drive circuit configured to switch the engine component to an OFF state if a

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difference between the rail voltage and the reference voltage exceeds a threshold amount.

24. **(Original)** The outboard motor of claim 19 wherein the engine component is an oil pump designed to deliver oil to the internal combustion engine and the engine control unit maintains operation of the oil pump at approximately one ampere when the oil pump is operating.

25. **(Original)** The outboard motor of claim 24 wherein the oil pump is rated to operate at a nominal 24 volts.

26. **(Original)** The outboard motor of claim 19 further comprising a MOSFET to control switching of the engine component between ON and OFF states.

27. **(Original)** The outboard motor of claim 19 wherein the internal combustion engine is configured to operate on a rail voltage between 30 and 60 volts.

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